The Dillard University athletics department introduced Bernard Griffith as the new coach of its men's basketball team at a press conference in Dent Hall on Thursday, July 28 at 1 p.m.

"This is one of those jobs you look forward to," said Griffith. "We've got a good nucleus, a good staff, and we're in the process of changing the culture."

Griffith has compiled a 694-204 (.772) record over a decorated career that has included coaching stints at St. Augustine High School, Southern University at Baton Rouge, Xavier University and Jesuit High School. At St. Augustine, Griffith's teams won 11 district titles, and made 13 consecutive playoff appearances and eight Final Four appearances.

“Bernard Griffith will bring our men’s basketball program proven success, leadership and integrity,” said Athletic Director Kiki Baker Barnes. “He will be able to establish a solid foundation for our program with regards to community involvement, awareness and recruiting.”

Following Hurricane Katrina, Griffith coached at the professional level. With Griffith as an assistant, the 2006 Dallas Mavericks finished with the best overall record in the NBA and reached the NBA Finals.

Griffith has also coached several former NBA players when they were at the high school level, including Kerry Kittles, Pointer Williams, Torry Andrews, Hollis Price, and New Jersey Nets Head Coach Avery Johnson.

At the press conference, Griffith addressed the importance of recruiting locally and getting the community excited about the Dillard Bleu Devils again. In return, he said his players will be active in the community; Griffith said he has already made plans for his players to volunteer at a local elementary school and hospital.

Griffith also noted the importance of academics for student athletes. "Plan A is to get a Dillard degree with the best possible GPA," he said.

Griffith with players from the Dillard Bleu Devils basketball team.